

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 19, 2013
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick, Durst and Buckner-Webb
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Chairman Goedde

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** called the Education Committee to order at 3:05 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.

PRESENTATION: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Dr. Selma Grace, Chief Academic Affairs Officer, State Board of Education (SBE). **Dr. Grace** introduced Dr. Lita Burns, Vice President for Instruction, North Idaho College (NIC); Dr. Heidi Estrem, Associate Professor and Director of the First-Year Writing Program, Boise State University (BSU); and Dr. Monte Boisen, Chair, Department of Mathematics, University of Idaho (UI), to speak on various approaches to remediation on their campuses.

Dr. Grace used a slide presentation and handouts (see attachment 1) to review the results of the SBE's remediation reform efforts. She said the SBE is committed to increasing the educational attainment of Idaho's citizens. In June 2012, they approved the revised Complete College Idaho Plan. The three initiatives included in this plan are to: (1) clarify and implement college and career readiness education and assessment; (2) develop a statewide model for transformation of remedial placement and support; and (3) provide three model options for remediation: co-requisite, emporium and accelerated.

Dr. Grace said a key component of addressing the remedial need is implementation of the Idaho Core State Standards (ICSS), which will help address the misalignment between K-12 education, college and career expectations. She said current standards are not rigorous enough. During the 2011-12 school year, 74.4 percent of first-time freshman students, graduating within the prior 12 months and attending an Idaho community college, required remediation. For students attending a four-year college, that number was 26.2 percent.

Dr. Grace said by implementing the ICSS, revising assessment and placement tools and practices, and updating the delivery models, students will be better prepared, will be placed more accurately, and will transition more seamlessly into credit-bearing courses.

Dr. Lita Burns spoke about NIC's Summer Bridge Program (Math Boot Camp), via the Education Internet Network (EIN). The boot camp was founded to address the need for math appropriate courses that aligned with professional-technical education (PTE). The program focuses on contextualized remediation in the area of math placement testing preparation and intensive student class services. The goal was to measure math level prior to the boot camp; those students, whose scores suggested the need for remedial tutoring, were enrolled in a four-week course to ready them for the fall semester. Results showed that through intensive integration in class plus tutoring, 90 percent of boot camp students were able to be placed in a college-level class.

Dr. Heidi Estrem, Associate Professor and Director of the First-Year Writing Program at Boise State University, explained on the new English 101+ course. Unlike the former English 90 course, a remedial, non-credit course, English 101+ is identical to English 101, but remedial students receive an additional 85 hours of non-class support and finish with seven college-level credits. This approach eliminates the stigma of English 90 and builds confidence, since students integrate into a class with a wider range of writers. Because the course is new, hard data does not yet exist on the success of English 101+, but BSU expects the class to aid in increased student retention as well as lower overall costs.

Dr. Monte Boisen, Chair of the Department of Mathematics, University of Idaho, reviewed the Polya Math Learning Center program and explained how the program provides students with remediation assistance (see attachment 3). The program focuses on completion of Math 108, which is not considered to be a remedial course, but is the lowest level pre-Calculus course offered for credit at Idaho colleges and universities. In the Polya approach, students are treated as individual learners. Rather than using the one-size-fits-all approach, which has been taught for many years, each student receives the level of support that he or she needs, utilizing technology to expose them to the material. He said 30 percent of students pass who take one or two remedial courses and then take Math 108. In comparison, 50 to 60 percent pass who take Math 108 using the Polya approach. **Dr. Boisen** said his department is currently working to create additional learning tools to help those students become even more successful. Because of the flexible nature of the Polya Math Learning Center, he said it will be easy to connect appropriate students with these learning tools.

Vice Chairman Mortimer asked Dr. Grace to explain what is being done in the K-12 classes to reduce the need for remediation prior to college. **Dr. Grace** said the ICSS is most important. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** thanked the presenters for the information and complimented the SBE for its work.

PRESENTATION: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Mr. Jim Griffin, President, Colorado League of Charter Schools, who presented an analysis of charter school facilities in Idaho (see attachment 4). **Mr. Griffin** said the focus of his analysis is on facilities because this area has been a problem from the beginning. He said a comprehensive survey of facilities, published in 2008, has helped shape policies. **Mr. Griffin** said other states have asked the Colorado League of Charter Schools for help. Washington State has also helped fund a national survey, which is now in its third year.

Mr. Griffin said that in some states, charter schools receive tax initiative assistance to help with facilities, but this is not the case in Idaho. Lack of funding assistance results in smaller schools an insufficient amenities, such as gymnasiums and cafeterias. In addition, he said that only 35 percent of Idaho charter schools have kitchens which qualify for federal support. The rest receive no federal support to provide hot lunches.

A question-and-answer period ensued relative to percentage of state appropriations for charter schools, and the permanence of and funding for charter school facilities. **Mr. Griffin** did not have data on the percentage of state appropriations for facilities. He said that if charter schools are to be part of Idaho's future, the state must deal with facilities funding, and that a number of financing tools exist to simplify the process. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** thanked Mr. Griffin for his report.

MOTION: **Senator Durst** moved to approve the minutes of January 29, 2013. The motion was seconded by **Senator Thayne**. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MOTION: **Senator Buckner-Webb** moved to approve the minutes of February 5, 2013. The motion was seconded by **Senator Thayne**. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

S 1089

Vice Chairman Mortimer recognized **Senator Bayer**, who explained **S 1089**. This legislation repeals § 33-1004G, Idaho Code, relating to the Early Retirement Incentive program for teachers, which distributes bonuses to teachers who are at least age 55, are retiring before age 63, and before reaching their Public Employees Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI) "Rule of 90" (age plus years of teaching). **Senator Bayer** explained the program was originally established in 1996 as a way to encourage teachers to retire who did not wish to receive technology training and incorporate technology into instruction. He said all remaining teachers have long since received technology training, which has been a requirement in Idaho teacher preparation programs for many years. **Senator Bayer** emphasized that **S 1089** will ensure that limited dollars remain in the classroom, as they have in FY12 and FY13, and are not diverted to pay bonuses to those who are no longer teaching. He said if the legislation is not passed, the cost the General Fund will be an additional \$3.6 million, beginning in FY14. If the legislation passes, there will be no additional cost to the General Fund.

TESTIMONY:

Vice Chairman Mortimer welcomed **Ms. Robin Nettinga**, Executive Director of the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP), Idaho Education Association (IEA), who testified in opposition to **S 1089**. **Ms. Nettinga** described a hypothetical teacher who began work at age 22, left to raise a family from age 27 to age 44, and then returned to teaching. She said without ERIP, nothing will exist to help that teacher reach the "Rule of 90" unless she works well beyond retirement age. She said ERIP is a cost savings to the state because, by leaving, the older, higher-paid teachers create space for less experienced, generally lower-paid teachers to take their place. **Ms. Nettinger** also said that since the inception of ERIP, more than 51 percent teachers who retired between 1996 and 2009 used the program, which verifies its importance.

Vice Chairman Mortimer asked Mr. Jason Hancock, Deputy Chief of Staff, State Department of Education, to provide details on cost versus savings relative to the ERIP program. **Mr. Hancock** said he was in favor **S 1089** because there was proof of savings during the past two years of curtailment. He distributed a handout showing his Department's calculations on the cost of ERIP and commented further that teachers retire for a host different reasons, usually not because of the ERIP incentive. His handout is attached and incorporated by reference **Senator Bayer** summarized the rationale for adoption of **S 1089**.

MOTION:

Senator Patrick moved to send **S 1089** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Fulcher** seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE:**

Senator Durst requested a roll call vote. **Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick** and **Vice Chairman Mortimer** voted **aye**. **Senators Durst** and **Buckner-Webb** voted **nay**. The motion carried. **Senator Bayer** will carry **S 1089** to the floor.

ADJOURNED:

Having no further business to come before the committee, **Vice Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

Senator Mortimer
Vice Chairman

Elaine Leedy
Secretary